

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, and 13-26 are pending. Claims 1, 7 and 15-18 have been amended. Claims 19-26 have been added to provide Applicant with a more complete scope of protection. Claims 1, 7 and 15-18, 19 and 23 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 10, 11 and 14 (and presumably 15-18) were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over U.S. Patent Publication 2001/0037266 (Schroeder) in view of U.S. Patent 5,859,971 (Bittinger et al.). Claims 3, 6, 9 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schroeder and Bittinger et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,852,717 (Bhide et al.). Applicant traverse.

Claim 1 is directed to a method of identifying a server that is one of a plurality of servers from a client terminal having a browser, a memory device and a processor, the plurality of servers and the client terminal being connectable with each other via a communications network. The method includes: a) transmitting a first request packet from the browser to one of the plurality of servers for requesting identity of an intended server maintaining a shared data file; b) receiving the first request packet at the one server and transmitting therefrom server specific information to the browser, indicating the identity of the intended server; c) receiving the server specific information at the browser; d) transmitting a second request packet from the processor containing the identity of the intended server to the network for requesting downloading of the shared data file, whereby the second request packet is automatically routed through the network to the intended server; e) receiving the second request packet at the intended server and downloading the requested shared data file from the intended server to the processor, and

storing the downloaded shared data file in the memory device; and f) transmitting from the intended server to the processor differential data representing a difference between an updated version of the shared data file currently maintained by the intended server and the shared data file that was downloaded in step (e) from the intended server to the processor. The method further includes receiving, at the intended server, server specific information from another server of the network that contains the identity of the another server if the shared data file has been moved from the intended server to the another server and transmitting the received server specific information to the browser.

In the communications network of the Schroeder reference, a plurality of E-commerce servers 28, 30, 32 and a UPC (universal product code) image file server 10 are provided. As shown in Fig. 1, the client browser 22, 24, 26 initially accesses (34) one of the servers 28, 30, 32 and receives a web page and the identity (36) of the UPC image file server 10, with which the client browser accesses (38) the server 10. Server 10 forwards an image file (40) to the client browser, which downloads the image from the server 10. The downloaded product image is called into the web page at the user terminal.

The cited Bittinger et al. patent relates to CGI (common gateway interface) forms and allows the server to pass requests from a client browser to an external application. The web server returns an output from the external application to the web browser.

Neither Schroeder nor Bittinger are believed by Applicant to teach or suggest the receiving, at the intended server, of server specific information from another server of the network that contains the identity of the another server if the shared data file has been moved from the intended server to the other server and transmitting the received server specific information to the browser, as recited in amended claim 1.

In view of the above, amended claim 1 is believed clearly patentable over the combination of Schroeder and Bittinger..

The other independent claims also recite a feature substantially similar to the feature discussed above in connection with amended claim 1. For example, new claims 19 and 23 include a limitation that the server-specific information (SSI), which is transmitted from each one of a plurality of servers in response to the first request packet from the client terminal, contains an identifier identifying a second intended server that maintains the shared data file if the latter has been moved to that second intended server from a first intended server. Using the identifier contained in the SSI, the client terminal sends a second request packet to the second intended server to download the desired shared data file. Support for the added limitations can be found at page 7, lines 8 to 12, which reads as follows: "If the shared data file has moved from the server 120-1 to the server 120-2, the SSI sent in response to the previous request packet A1 contains the address of the new server 120-2 and the second request packet A2 is routed to this server as shown in Fig. 1".

The above-mentioned feature of the amended and new independent claims allows shared data files to be downloaded from any server that currently maintains the shared data file, which might be particularly advantageous if the client terminal were to sequentially access different servers of the network since complex techniques are not required for implementation.

The other claims are dependent on one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are believed patentable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims.

In view of the above, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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